



Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board of Trustees

Date: April 14, 2022
Time: 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM
Location: Conducted via remote participation

To join this Zoom meeting, please visit: <https://town-arlington-ma-us.zoom.us/join/84694812578>

Or call: (646) 876-9923
Meeting ID: 846 9481 2578

Members of the public are asked to send written comment to:
klynema@town.arlington.ma.us.

Agenda

1. Review and Approve Minutes of March 10, 2022 (5 minutes)
2. Review draft Action Plan outline and related materials (60 minutes)
3. Housing Plan update (5 minutes)
4. Housing-related warrant article update (10 minutes)
5. New Business (10 minutes)

Upcoming Meetings: May 12, June 9, July 14, August 11, September 8, October 13, November 10, December 8

Attachments

- Draft Minutes of Arlington AHTF Meeting of March 10, 2022
- Group Agreements
- Links to Resources and Reference Materials



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Attendees: Karen Kelleher, Phil Tedesco, Neal Mongold, Jaclyn Pacejo, Calpurnia Roberts, Eric Helmuth
Staff: Jennifer Raitt, Kelly Lynema
Guests: Jack Nagle, Jo Anne Preston

DRAFT Minutes

1. Review and Approve Minutes of February 10, 2022 (5 minutes)

Eric made a motion to approve. Jaclyn seconded. Unanimous vote to approve.

2. Election of new Secretary (10 minutes)

Tabled until next meeting.

3. Orientation Topic: Arlington Housing Authority, Jack Nagle (45 minutes)

Jack presented an overview of the mission, organizational structure, and properties managed by the Arlington Housing Authority (AHA). He described the AHA's management and distribution of Housing Choice Vouchers and in which municipalities recipients of vouchers live. He described the Family Self-Sufficiency Program, which enables families assisted by HUD to increase their earned income. Jack also provided an overview of the current waitlist for state-aided public housing, which is extensive.

He explained the AHA's maintenance and operating budgets, describing the proportion of their budget sourced from rent receipts, state annual formula funding, and state and local grant opportunities.

Recent capital improvement projects at the AHA include roof replacement at Cusack Terrace, window replacement and building envelope repairs at Winslow Towers, and exterior renovation of the Drake Village Cottages. The AHA has plans to address ongoing capital needs: \$600,000 from multiple sources for electrical panels, \$3.5m for upgrades to windows at Menotomy Manor.

The AHA currently has four tenant associations and holds monthly meetings with tenants and management. The AHA funds the tenant associations beyond the

minimum requirement to help them fund activities at their discretion. The organization also collaborates with Food Link, Arlington EATS, Arlington's Council on Aging, and provides language and after school programs at Menotomy Manor and Minuteman Senior Services at Drake Village.

Discussion

Calpurnya asked about new projects and whether the AHA is looking to build more affordable housing. Jack said they are looking at potentially purchasing new units. In the past 5-10 years they purchased 5-10. There are no plans for any major housing projects.

Neal asked about the difference between HCVs and the Mass Rental Voucher program, and if we can get more used in Arlington. Jack explained that MRVP is funded through state and HCVs through the federal government. The AHA is interested in expanding voucher program. They are talking with Bedford about their VASH program.

Karen asked about whether there are ways we can work to keep more voucher recipients in Arlington to serve the affordable housing needs of Arlington residents. Jack responded that the program is mobile and provides options, and they can investigate whether vouchers are going to municipalities with lower or higher rents than Arlington, although he suspects both situations are happening. Regarding whether there are voucher holders in deed restricted affordable units, Jack was unsure if that data was available, but would talk with his staff. Regarding leveraging other resources, Karen noted that state-funded affordable housing is not adequately funded for capital improvements. She asked Jack for ideas about how the Trust can build a coalition around Arlington's housing needs, which includes preserving what we've got *and* creating more. Jack responded that he is excited about the Trust as an additional resource and that they share mutual goals. The AHA's goal is to create, maintain preserve affordable housing.

Eric asked what needs to happen structurally and who needs to be involved to produce more housing. He noted that preserving and maintaining our current affordable housing must be part of our long-range thinking. He asked whether voucher recipients must be given to current Arlington residents. Jack said anyone can apply, but to get preference you need to be a resident of or work in Arlington. Of all AHA voucher holders, 38% reside in Arlington. The benefit of voucher programs is the flexibility.

Jaclyn asked whether Jack had a sense for the how much it would cost to address the capital needs at all AHA properties. Jack said he doesn't have that amount for AHA, but MassMorrow, an advocacy group, did a campaign in the last year about importance of public housing. There is a link on AHA.org to understand financial needs.

Neal asked whether rental and choice vouchers count toward reaching Arlington's 10% subsidized housing inventory. Jenny responded no; to count toward Arlington's inventory the housing must be deed restricted affordable. Jack asked when the Trust anticipated being ready to receive applications for funding. Karen shared that the Trust does not currently have a dedicated source of funding. There is a home rule petition before the state legislature for approval on the real estate transfer fee, and we would appreciate Jack's assistance in advocating for this. Right now, the Trust has an award from CPA pending Town Meeting approval, as well as potential ARPA funding. She noted that the AHA and the Trust will be accessing the same resource pools, and that the Trust wants to anticipate AHA needs and plan for them. Jack said the AHA is revamping their five-year capital plan per state regulation. He will have a better sense for the AHA's needs in June. Their priority is to ensure that all preventative measures are addressed (fire alarm, electrical upgrades, etc. for maximum safety for residents).

Karen added that the Trust is going through an action planning process that will outline priorities for the next three to five years, and will engage with Jack, the AHA, HCA, and other bodies in town in that process.

Jo Anne asked whether the Trust will be hiring a consultant and if they would be in touch with Jack. She also asked about the sources of the Trust's current account balance. Jenny shared that the money was partially from when the Select Board dedicated funding to affordable housing as part of a disposition from the Symmes redevelopment. The other portion is from a payment in lieu of an affordable unit many years ago. Karen added that the scope of work for a consultant is being discussed. The Trust's goal is to develop an action plan in conjunction with ALL the bodies engaged in affordable housing in Arlington.

Eric added that the Trust is just starting out, and that the AHA is intentionally here at the beginning because the Trust is seeking a strategic partnership with all partners because there are multiple challenges to create, to maintain, and to preserve affordable housing.

Karen shared there are many steps left in the process to get the transfer fee approved. If the legislature approves, then it will go back to Town Meeting and the voters. The Trust will need help in creating the political will to invest in creating and preserving affordable housing.

4. Action Plan Update (30 minutes)

Karen reported that the Trust received only one proposal for the Action Plan. Some consultants she spoke with said that the scope was too broad, and some were not interested in the public engagement process. Others are simply not available due to their current workload. She proposed that the Trust move forward by taking on the first step of identifying goals and priorities on its own.

A working group of Jaclyn, Calpurnya, Neal, and Karen was established to work together to establish a framework for public engagement, establishing goals and priorities, and bringing that back to the Trust for review and approval. Members of the trust noted the importance of prioritizing the voices of those who need affordable housing in the engagement process. The working group's planning would help narrow the scope for hiring a consultant in a few months. This is to be done with the assumption that the overall timeframe for the development of the Action Plan is not changing.

Members of the Trust agreed with this approach. Karen added that she will reach out to Sue Doctrow of the CPA Committee to invite her to participate.

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Affordable Housing Trust Group Agreements

- **Be fully present**
Limit distractions, show up as fully as possible to the extent that you are able. Take care of yourself as needed.
- **Use “I” statements (speak based on your own experience)**
Speak from your own experience, where you’re coming from, rather than projecting your experience onto others. Frame your comments about how you are thinking and feeling, and avoid making assumptions about others and how they are feeling.
- **Take space, make space**
If you’ve been speaking a lot, consider listening to others. If you often talk a lot, make sure to share information geared toward the goal of the meeting. If you have not spoken up much, consider speaking up/contributing. Every member’s input is valuable.
- **Share the lesson, not the story (although if there’s time, it’s helpful to hear the story)**
Focus on sharing outcomes and lessons learned. If there is time, sharing the story can be helpful for context and visualize the issue/concern.
- **One microphone**
Talking over others can be very disruptive to the flow of the conversation. If someone is talking, it is important to recognize that they have the proverbial mic and wait for them to finish before you respond or join in.
- **Joint inquiry over advocacy**
Approach our work together as a process of inquiry together and sharing our perspectives. There is a time and a place for advocacy, but we should prioritize exploration of opportunities instead of a competing over ideas.
- **Use simple, accessible language, avoid jargon or acronyms**
Please use simple, accessible language and avoid jargons and undefined acronyms. If you use an acronym, make sure to define it for the group.
- **Listen for understanding**
Focus on listening and appreciating what others are trying to say, not only what you are hearing.
- **Offer what you can, don’t be afraid to ask for what you need**
You are responsible for your actions and for ideas you share. You are also responsible for taking care of yourself in the meeting.
- **Lean into the edges**
Some of our conversations might put us at the end of our comfort zone and trying on new ideas. Some of these conversations might be uncomfortable, and each of us might experience that during a meeting. If you’re experiencing discomfort, that’s okay. It is often a sign of growth.
- **Seek to build consensus, but accept and expect lack of closure**
We are not always going to solve problems or come to final conclusions in a single meeting. There may be ideas, concepts, conversations that we may want to go deeper with. We hope to be able to do that in

future meetings, but it's important to acknowledge that it may not always happen in the span of a single meeting.

- **Think outside the box**

Sometimes we are used to thinking of certain structures or frameworks for our work. Dare to think outside the structures we are used to and unlock your creative energy.

- **Dare to dream**

Be bold with your ideas and dare to dream big.

- **Everyone contributes energy to this space**

We each have our own experience and mood that we contribute to our meeting space. We welcome different energy and strongly feel it will get us closer to our desired outcome.

- **Mutual respect, always**

We respect each other as individuals, and for the perspective that we each bring to our discussions.

Adopted 11/18/2021

Arlington AHTF Governing Documents and Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund Reference Materials

- [Title II, Article 14 of the Town Bylaw](#) (Affordable Housing Trust Fund & Board of Trustees, ART. 8, STM 11/18/2020)
- [Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund Guidebook v.3](#), published by Massachusetts Housing Partnership
- [Municipal Affordable Housing Trust Fund Operations Manual](#), published by Massachusetts Housing Partnership
- [Arlington Affordable Housing Trust Fund Board Webpage](#)

Other Relevant Reference Materials

- [Massachusetts Open Meeting Law Guide and Educational Materials](#), published by Attorney General Maura Healey (includes statute, regulations and guidance)
- [Summary of the Conflict of Interest Law for Municipal Employees](#), State Ethics Commission